REMARKS

Telephone Interview

The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for taking time to interview this case. The interview included a discussion of "exclusive branching," "deactivated nodes," "dynamic nodes" and "summary collection nodes." The Examiner suggested that the proposed amendments would probably indicate the need for additional searching.

Exclusive Branching

Claims 1, 11 and 21 have been amended to recite "exclusive branching".

Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to recite:

- at least two branches within the hierarchical tree are mutually exclusive, the exclusivity comprising a logical OR to restrict traversal of the hierarchical tree to be among nodes associated with only one the at least two mutually exclusive branches;

Claim 21, including a proposed amendment, recites:

- at least two mutually exclusive branches, the exclusivity comprising a logical OR to restrict traversal of the hierarchical tree to nodes associated with only one the at least two mutually exclusive branches, wherein selection of one of the two mutually exclusive branches results in display of user interface pages associated with nodes with the selected branch;

Exclusive branching is discussed, for example, at page 14, lines 6—9. The use of mutually exclusive branches allows advancement along a sequence of nodes associated with the selected branch, while skipping pages associated with nodes in the non-selected branch. Thus, while traditional traversal of a hierarchical tree involves traversing the entire tree in an order determined by the branching and

node placement, the use of exclusive branches effectively removes part of the tree during the traversal.

Referring to Fig. 5, note that from P5 (wherein P5 is page 5 of the wizard) there are two mutually exclusive branches, one that is associated with P6A and P7A, and a second branch that leads to pages P6B and P7B. That is, selection of one branch precludes selection and/or traversal of the other branch. The "A" route (branch) and the "B" route are shown in solid or dotted lines, respectively, in the bottom inch or so of the center of Fig. 5. Thus, mutually exclusive branching results in the two mutually exclusive paths of hierarchical tree traversal, and two mutually different page displays to the user.

Referring to a portion of Fig. 5, pasted below, "Branch A" refers to nodes 512 and below, while "Branch B" refers to nodes 514 and below. Thus, at node 508 (not shown below, but in Fig. 5 node 508 is the node 'above' nodes 512 and 514) the navigation module traverses only one of the branches, "A" or "B". <u>Note the "OR" between the Branches, A and B</u>. This contrasts with the normal manner of tree traversal, which every branch is traversed to the end, then retraced to a branching point, *at which time the branch not originally taken is traversed.* However, in the "mutually exclusive" branches recited by the claim, the other branch is not traversed.

Accordingly, "mutually exclusive branches" result in branches that are never traversed, in contrast with conventional hierarchical trees, wherein each branch is traversed in turn.

Note the "OR" in the graph below, which indicates that the "A" pages are logically OR'ed with the "B" pages. That is, only the "A" or "B" pages are displayed. (From Fig. 5.)
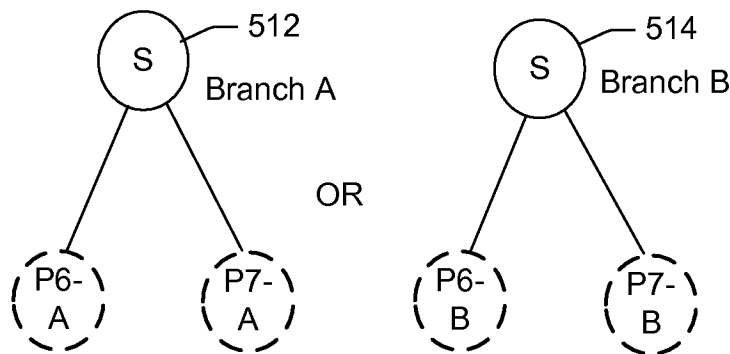
The Li reference does not teach the use of hierarchical trees; however, O'Carroll does. O'Carroll teaches branching at [0098], but does not teach the use of mutually exclusive branches, where traversal of one branch excludes the possibility of using the other branch, and therefore prevents travel over all of the branch elements. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, recite elements not taught or suggested by the prior art of record.

Deactivated Nodes

Claim 21 has been amended to recite "deactivate nodes".

Claim 21, including a proposed amendment, recites:

- one or more deactivated nodes, wherein node deactivation prevents display of one or more optionally displayed pages associated with the one or more deactivated nodes;

1 Thus, claim 21, as amended, recites "deactivated nodes," which are

2 discussed at page 14, lines 10—1. In discussing "deactivated nodes," the

3 Applicant teaches that attributes within each node allow it to be "deactivated."

4 Such deactivation will prevent display of a page (of the wizard user interface)

5 associated with that node. Thus, as the tree is traversed, thereby displaying pages

6 of the wizard associated with the nodes traversed, deactivated nodes are

7 encountered. Since the deactivated nodes are deactivated, the associated node is

8 not displayed.

9 The Applicant respectfully submits that O'Carroll reference does not teach

10 or suggest deactivated nodes and/or an associated means of preventing the display

11 of a page associated with such a node. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully

12 submits that the claims, as amended, recite elements not taught or suggested by the

13 prior art of record.

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15 **Dynamic Nodes**

16 **Claim 21**, including a proposed amendment, recites:

17 • at least one dynamic node, wherein characteristics of the at least one
   dynamic node are determined at run-time and a single dynamic node
18 can function in different ways depending on a strategy associated
19 with it;

20 Thus, claim 21, as amended, recites at least one "dynamic node" (see

21 particularly page 12 lines 1—5). Dynamic nodes are discussed at least at page 12

22 lines 1—5, page 17 lines 1—7 and page 20 lines 12—14. A dynamic node may be

23 configured at run time (page 12 line 4), and may result in an open-ended number

24 (that is, an essentially unlimited number) of navigational options (page 7 lines 4—

25

7). Accordingly, a node may be configured at run-time, with at least any of the characteristics of the nodes described in the Applicant's specification at run-time.

The O'Carroll reference teaches the use of moveable nodes 104 (see paragraph [0104], last several lines). However, the Applicant respectfully submits that moving nodes does not teach or suggest dynamic nodes. In particular, O'Carroll fails to teach or suggest that node characteristics are determined at run-time. O'Carroll also fails to teach or suggest that a single node can function in different ways according to a strategy associated with it.

In making out the rejection of claims 8 and 17, the Patent Office pointed to O'Carroll at [0025], wherein O'Carroll teaches dynamically generated merge instructions for merging two hierarchical trees. However, the Applicant submits that, as amended, claim 21 recites a "dynamic node," and that such a node is not anticipated, taught or suggested by O'Carroll's teaching of "merge instructions (to merge hierarchical trees) that are dynamically generated from a rule" (O'Carroll at [0025]). Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the use of dynamic nodes as recited by claim 21, as amended.

Summary Collection Node

Claim 21, including a proposed amendment, recites:

- a summary collection node, configured to display a sequence of pages, and upon termination of the sequence of pages, to return to an initial summary page presented by the summary collection node;

Thus, claim 21, as amended, recites "a summary collection node" (see particularly page 11 lines 18—24). The summary collection node terminates by

returning to an initial summary page presented earlier. This results in what is essentially a loop. Because of these characteristics, the Applicant respectfully submits that the summary collection node is unlike any node taught or suggested by O'Carroll.

Conclusion

The Applicant submits the above four aspects for consideration as claim amendments in a discussion of an RCE application.

Respectfully Submitted,

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